(U) Letter to the Editor: Helping Your Leaders Make Decisions that Stick

FROM: SIGINT Communications
Unknown
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(U) We received some feedback on the article Helping Your Leaders Make Decisions that Stick :

From: ███████████████ (███████████)

(U) I wanted to say I thought the article entitled *The Bald Truth: Helping Your Leaders Make Decisions that Stick* was a very good article, and something that many people seem to need to hear. I think that the prevelance of the Point Solution Briefing is the result of -- continuing the analogy in the article -- the metaphor/analogy virus that NSA suffers from. The virus often causes good ideas to be taken way too literally, and the point they were trying to get across is often overlooked.

(U) After all, it makes sense for people to make a Point Solution Briefing when "leaders don't want to just hear problems, they want solutions!" The Agency has a very bad habit of taking analogies, example cases, and metaphors and turning them into the basis for strategy. Just like a point-solution briefing can lead to the problem not being solved because of constant re-evaluation, many other programs end up being more harmful than useful because the analogy or metaphor or other figure of speech is taken too literally.

(S//SI) Take the DNI content presentation philosophy, for example: "Analysts want to see data the way the user saw it." So now we have the concept of "native view." While we currently refer to the "native" presentation of the data, analysts would not be happy with -- and would not want to use -- a system that only gave them a choice between displaying what the target saw or the raw data. What analysts want, and have been able to get for some data with current presentation systems, is something LIKE what the user saw, but with all kinds of SIGINT information and normally hidden data presented as well. Unfortunately, there are still future systems that seem to be building to meet the "native view" simile, instead of the true needs of the analyst.

(S//SI) Then there is the more general idea of how to get to analysts' DNI data. It seems that examples are provided to decision-makers such as "We want to see data like in the CNE Portal" or "We want to view data as easily as going to a web portal." Here again the analogy is often talked about as if it is the solution. My hope is that leaders and solution providers have worked to find out why analysts like these interfaces (they are easy ways to traverse metadata of different kinds to get to content that we care about, and provide customizable views and single query points), and are building to the underlying needs of the analysts.

(U) Again, I think this article is great to see from a leader, and certainly something I hope a lot of others (especially those who

don't already recognize this as a problem) get a chance to read.

(U//FOUO) See [more comments](#) on this article.

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